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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
14 March 1966

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Situation in South Vietnam
(As of 8:00 A.M. EST)

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orderly demonstrations for General Thi were held this morning in Hue and Quang Ngai city. There was no estimate of the size of the crowds. As of mid morning, commercial activity in Hue appeared to be normal, with about 85% of the city's shops reported open.

2. One wire service (Reuters) gave a different version of the public meeting in Hue this morning, claiming that an estimated 7,000 demonstrators gathered in response to the statement issued on Saturday by the Buddhist hierarchy in Saigon. Speakers at the meeting reportedly made no specific reference to General Thi, but called instead for political unity and a return to elected civilian government in South Vietnam.

3. US military officials have also reported that there were apparently no demonstrations held in Da Nang this morning; according to the press, commercial activity there today is back to normal after yesterday's work stoppage. Persons attending a public meeting in Da Nang late yesterday afternoon were told that the general strike was over. In contrast to previous gatherings, there were few military personnel present in uniform yesterday, probably as a result of acting I Corps commander General Chuan's order forbidding the participation of military personnel in demonstrations.

4. This morning's English-language papers in Saigon are featuring the 12 March Buddhist press

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conference as a "call for national unity". The demand for the return of the generals is reported but not given great prominence.

5. The execution of Ta Vinh--a Chinese Businessman convicted of profiteering--was carried out at 0530 this morning as scheduled (Saigon time). Members of the press and television cameramen were present. There has been no visible reaction in Saigon reported as yet.

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